

great political fashion, we all stood up there and took the bows for it. That is the rules of the game.

Another part about that is you do not see the staff up there cutting the ribbon, taking the bows, getting the applause. Kathryn Lehman is one of those staff members who has not been in the forefront of the limelight and yet, should. She has worked for every significant Republican leader in this House of Representatives for the last 10 years or more. Every critical decision of this House, every major piece of legislation was worked on on a team in which she was a staff member, anything from the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HENRY HYDE) to the Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, and, most recently, our conference Chair, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE). The legislation that we moved all had the invisible fingerprint of Kathryn Lehman.

I, as vice chairman of the Republican Conference, have had a chance to work with her. I can tell my colleagues she is intelligent, she is well versed, she is in the background, and she is a pro. One thing I will say, though, that is also significant about her, she works hard and, at times, when she has that rare opportunity to play and relax, she plays hard. I remember one occasion with her, getting the chance to see her shoot skeet. We were with some people who were pretty hotshot skeet shooters, and I looked over there and she was shooting a 28 gauge, which means you have to shoot a clay pigeon practically with a BB gun. It is impossible to do. I think out of 25 she hit 24 of them, and maybe I bumped her on that 25th.

But she is kind of a true renaissance person of today, somebody who knows how to enjoy life, get out and relax and mix and mingle with different types of people; yet, when it comes time to work, she is a hard-core, very straightforward professional.

We will miss her, Democrats and Republicans alike. She has been an institutionalist, somebody who has made this place better because of her presence.

Kathryn, we wish you the best. Have fun over across the street or whatever street you are going to be on.

□ 2000

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, today and pretty much every day for most

Americans of this year, they will see 6.2 percent taken out of their paycheck to pay for their Social Security retirement. If they are self-employed, they will see 12.4 percent taken out. That is everyone who earns up to \$90,000 every paycheck, day in day out they are paying that tax.

And in paying that tax, they will create a \$170 billion surplus to pay for future retirement benefits for themselves. But, now, the President has revealed his true agenda. After talking about privatization for months, something which would, in fact, worsen the financial condition of Social Security, he has now changed the debate to talking about how he is going to reduce the retirement benefits of middle-class Americans.

Now, things are a little bit different from the President. I mean, we will disregard all of his unearned income and all of the things that he has been given and all of those earnings. Let us just talk about his salary, \$400,000 as President of the United States. So that means that the President of the United States pays Social Security tax until 3 a.m. on March 24.

Now, that does not seem quite fair. Other working Americans are going to pay that tax all year long. But, let us look at some of Mr. Bush's friends. Tom Freston and Les Moonves of Viacom. They stop paying Social Security tax at 4 a.m. on January 2, because they earn \$77,000 a day.

Now, it really is not going to matter or even be noticed by George Bush when they are reduced or Mr. Freston or Mr. Moonves at Viacom, you know, not even their accountants will notice it, but it is certainly going to be noticed by those middle-class Americans.

The President's cuts, which he cast as being fair and progressive, will fall most heavily on middle-income working families in this country. You know, a median, what they call a median earner, \$36,000, say a public school teacher, will see, if they retired 40 years from now, a young teacher, they will see a reduction of 16 percent in their Social Security benefits, from \$19,000 down to \$16,000. I think they are going to notice that; it is going to hurt a lot.

What the President's folk call a high earner, \$58,400 a year, well they will see a 25 percent reduction. In fact, the reduction for people who earn \$58,000 a year will be equal to or worse than if Congress did nothing about Social Security, because it is not going to be bankrupt like the President says. Social Security will never be bankrupt. Stop saying that.

It will have to, if nothing is done and we have a very bad economy, reduce benefits by, say, 20 percent according to the Republican Congressional Budget Office or 25 percent, so they can pay benefits into the indefinite future, starting 40 or 50 years from now. That is not a crisis. That is not bankruptcy.

But the President would guarantee reductions, at least that big, for many

working families to save the program. But that is not all. That is not all the President has in mind. Because, he said, this is based on the Pozen plan, some financial guru out there who he says is a Democrat. Who cares if he is a Democrat or Republican. He is some rich guy, financial guy. And what Mr. Pozen proposed is you not only reduce retirement benefits, you reduce survivor's benefits, and you reduce disability benefits.

That is what the President said he endorses last week during his speech. He is going to reduce middle-income retirees' Social Security benefits 25 percent. And if they should be so unlucky as to become totally disabled, incapable of working, he is going to reduce their disability benefits by 25 percent; or should they have even more misfortune and die, their survivors will get a reduced benefit of 25 percent to, quote, save the program.

The President is not done there, though. He is not only reducing survivors benefits, retirement benefits, disability benefits. He wants to push these people into so-called voluntarily private plans after he has reduced their benefits; and the so-called private plans, the President's privatization has a little something called a claw-back, which is the government is allowing you to divert your Social Security money, but it is considered to be a loan, which will be repaid at the time of your retirement, death, or disability at the rate of 3 percent plus inflation.

Now, if your investments did not do too well, your survivors are going to be writing the government a check; or if you get to retirement and you did not do too well, well, you are going to see your Social Security benefits reduce up to 97 percent under the President's privatization plan.

There are better ways to secure the financial future of Social Security, which I will talk about on another evening.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GUTKNECHT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to take my Special Order at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

FAREWELL TO KATHRYN LEHMAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.